

December 20, 2012

Board of Directors

Organization **Girls Traveling Slow Pitch Softball**

Commissioner – Jason Barta

Assistant Commissioner – Rob Warmka

Treasurer –Ann Hennessey

Secretary - Marti Fisher

At Large Equipment – Mike Olander

At Large Tournaments – Tammy Hamblin

At Large Public Relations – Terry Boeder

Mission Statement

The Burnsville Girls Traveling Slow Pitch (GTSP) program goals are for each athlete to enjoy the sport through an environment which promotes fun, fosters improved skills and develops winning attitudes enabling our youth to continue to be one of the recognized leaders of the girls slow pitch players in the State of Minnesota.

Volunteer Commitment

Volunteers are vital to any well-run program to ensure a successful and enjoyable season for all participants and families. For our program to continue to be successful, new volunteers are needed each year. **Parents are required to volunteer during Fundraising and if needed, assisting with positions such as food concessions, field maintenance or other duties at Tournaments hosted in Burnsville.** A volunteer coordinator is needed from each team to coordinate fundraising activities and scheduling for any hosted tournaments.

Code of Conduct

BAC Girls Traveling Softball Sportsmanship Code

I will do my best to remember that sports are supposed to be fun and to enjoy competition. Winning and losing is part of the game. I will respect both my team and opponents.

Every coach, parent and player will sign a team agreement form. By signing the team agreement form, this indicates that everyone understands and agrees to this responsibility. The entire code of conduct agreement can be found on the www.bactravelingsoftball.org website.

Penalty

Abusing rules brings restrictions. A penalty may vary from a verbal warning, coach discussion with parents and commissioner, a one game suspension, or season suspension. Depending on the severity of the incident, it may also lead to permanent restrictions for this season and/or the following sport season. A process will be followed to involve parents, league commissioner and the BAC commissioner if necessary.

Girls Traveling Slow Pitch Program Guidelines

Public input

All members of the GTSP program shall have the right to be heard with respect to any Bylaw or Guideline which the board has under consideration for adoption or which the board has already adopted. Members are invited to Board meetings and may be heard on any such matter during the open forum portion of the meeting.

Dual Service

With no exceptions, the GTSP board members are not restricted from obtaining coaching positions (including head coach). They may not be directly involved in the coaching selection process for the age level to which they are applying.

Coach Service

Coaches are selected each year in accordance to the applicable Bylaws. An individual may be prohibited from coaching for more than 3 consecutive years provided a qualified replacement has applied. Persons interested in coaching shall fill out a coaching application and a back ground investigation form and it shall be reviewed by either a selection committee or by the Commissioner or both. The decision of the Commissioner is final.

Player & Parent Guidelines/Playing Time

Burnsville GTSP uses ASA age eligibility rules to determine playing level, which is their age as of December 31st prior to the summer season.

Coaches shall afford an opportunity at practice to develop all players who show desire and the ability to pitch. Those that show they are capable should be given an opportunity to pitch during league games, at the coach's discretion.

All teams are required to meet for practice at least once a week.

Coaches shall provide equal offensive time for all players. Defensive playing time should be relatively equal to all players throughout the season. (Equal for defensive positions means within 20% of available innings throughout the entire season.) Barring injury, disciplinary action or illness, no player should be denied the opportunity to participate in each game. **The coaches are required to bat all players for all innings of each game (other than exceptions noted.)** The only exception is for tournaments played under 10-man rules. With this exception the head coach must notify the parents and players of the team about this decision and used only when absolutely necessary to keep the team in the competition for the tournament.

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Players shall show respect for the umpire, the opposing team, their coaches and their teammates at all times. Verbal abuse, profanity, throwing equipment or similar forms of disrespect will not be tolerated at any time and may, at the discretion of the coach, result in the removal from the game or other disciplinary action. Players may never argue with the umpire; any challenge or comment should be directed to the coach, who can determine whether or not to raise it with the umpire.

Guidelines for coaches, if a player is ejected from a game by an umpire:

- A) First Offense-Verbal Warning
- B) Second Offense-Written Warning given to player and parents notified by email or phone call.
- C) Third Offense-Parent/Coach conference with Assistant Commissioner and/or Commissioner about severity of player's misconduct, and suspension from the next game or tournament
- D) Fourth Offense- Elimination for the remainder of the season and discuss the possibility of not being eligible for future placement on a team.

Attendance

- 1) Players are responsible for being on time to all practices and games. The coach may impose sanctions to ensure compliance.
- 2) Players must give their coach reasonable advance notice if she will be unable to attend any practice or game or if she will be late.

Parents should raise all concerns, comments or complaints with the coach directly and in a private manner, rather than during the game or in front of others. Please use good judgment and a calm approach away from the playing area. Never enter the bench or playing area unless invited by the coach or in the case of a medical emergency

Coaches/Scorekeeper

Each team shall have a head coach and one or two assistant coaches. If the head coach chooses he may enlist a scorekeeper as well. If there is more than one applicant for the head coach's position, the candidates will be interviewed by a selection committee or the GTSP Board for which membership is dictated by the Commissioner. The Board shall take a vote and if there is a tie the decision of the Commissioner on the appointment of the head coaches is final.

The score keeper may be in the bench area with the approval of the head coach.

Coaches should lead by example and strive to foster their players' self-confidence and engage in constructive rather than destructive criticism. Shouting at or berating a player publicly or privately is not acceptable.

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Coaches are discouraged from arguing with an umpire. Judgment calls can't be argued and therefore are not appropriate. However, discussing rule interpretations is appropriate and encouraged so that all players understand an umpire's decision. Any challenges should be conducted by the head coach and only in a dignified and respectful manner. Any coach who is ejected from a game for any reason other than safety concerns will, on the first such occasion, be called before the board and required to explain the circumstances on the second such occasion, the board shall remove the coach from his or her position for the season.

Coaches should make a commitment to their team and to the GTSP program to attend all practices and games. If the conduct of the head coach is not in the best interest of the GTSP program or the team the head coach may be replaced by a majority vote from the board to remove him or her entirely from the coaching staff. When a coach is unable to be in attendance a suitable replacement will be named and he or she should have had a back ground check pre season as well.

Coaches shall not allow any other persons in the dug-out during practice, games, and tournaments etc. This includes other friends, boyfriends, girlfriends, and parents etc. that have no official involvement with the team.

Photography/Journalists

Photo journalists will be allowed in the player's bench area on a periodic basis with the approval of the head coach. The photo journalist shall consult with the tournament director prior to the games to determine where they will allow him or her to stand without causing interference for either team. This is especially important in Tournaments.

The Photography Company shall be chosen for the GTSP program by a majority vote of the Board prior to each season. This photographer will be designated as the season's tournament/game photographer and will be allowed full access to all fields within the discretion of the tournament director. In the Burnsville Tournament the photojournalist shall have authority to either bench area, with the approval of the head coaches.

Grievance Process

Grievances raised by parents/players shall be resolved through the following process:

Grievances should be raised initially with the head coach in a private and constructive fashion and not during a game, tournament setting or with other team members present.

If a conference with the coach does not lead to the resolution of the grievance, or if the parent/player is uncomfortable discussing the matter directly with the coach, the parent/player may raise the grievance with the Board.

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If after discussion with the Board the grievance is not satisfactorily resolved, the parent may raise the grievance with the Commissioner who shall bring it before the Board.

The decision of the Board and Commissioner shall be final

Grievances raised by coaches shall be resolved through the following process:

Grievances should be raised initially with the parent in a private and constructive fashion and not during a game tournament setting or with other team members present.

If a conference with the parent does not lead to the resolution of the grievance, or if the coach is uncomfortable discussing the matter directly with the parent/player the coach may raise the grievance with the Board.

If after the discussion with the Board the grievance is not resolved the coach may raise the grievance with the commissioner who shall bring it before the Board.

If the grievance is against a coach who is a member of the current board, this member will not be a part of the discussion and decision by the board.

The decision of the Board and Commissioner is final.

Use of Uniforms, Equipment and Facilities

All equipment owned by the Burnsville GTSP program shall be maintained by GTSP and shall be labeled as belonging to GTSP and shall be listed on a master inventory.

Player's complete uniforms must be worn in all scheduled games and tournaments.

Players must exercise proper care in using equipment owned by GTSP during games and practices so that any unnecessary damage can be avoided.

All equipment and uniforms must be returned to the equipment manager no later than September 1. Each coach is responsible for all equipment and uniforms issued to them. Parents are responsible for assisting in this duty by exercising proper care in the cleaning of uniforms and helping with their timely return. Uniforms tops shall be used for two consecutive years. Each player may keep her shorts and socks. In the event a uniform is stained or not salvageable the GTSP shall replace the uniform or uniforms before the season if at all possible with the closest matching uniform available.

No later than October 1 of each year an inventory shall be taken of all such equipment. The equipment manager shall conduct the inventory. Those who conduct the inventory shall report any discrepancies to the Commissioner who shall bring such matter to the Board's attention for correction.

Fundraising

The B.A.C. Board requires that plans for fundraising, including tournaments and clinics must be included in each sports budget, and results must be included in the final report at the season's end. The BAC board of directors will review an annual list of approved fundraising activities to serve as a guideline for each activities use. All fundraising must be done in accordance with the approved financial policy of the organization. The GTSP program has utilized raffles, sponsorships, car washes, grocery bagging and a hot dog sale as it's annual fundraising activities in previous years.

Individual teams must get approval from the GTSP board to fundraise outside of the GTSP fundraisers. These funds must be used to offset team traveling expenses to out of state tournaments or for participating in additional tournaments.

Any team that qualifies for a recognized association's National tournament and chooses to participate may have their entry fee paid by Burnsville Athletic Club. This decision is based on cost and distance to the tournament and available funds. The team must submit a request to the BAC. Recognized associations will be identified and communicated to all coaches prior to the season commencement.

Sports Seasons

The Burnsville GTSP program should take special consideration when determining the number of tournaments to participate in for the season. All tournaments and their approximate location should be submitted for approval with the annual budget or an amended activity description to the B.A.C. Board.

All Traveling programs running concurrently with a like In House program will make every effort to hold try-outs and post cuts prior to the formation of In-House teams.

It is the organizations belief that participation in more than one sport at the same time, by the same Participant is not only detrimental to the participant but is unfair to the teams that they are participating on. Therefore, no participant may register for or be rostered on two teams during the same season without the express written consent of both activity Commissioners.

With prior approval from both commissioners a participant may substitute in more than one sport as a substitute. For example, an In House or Fast Pitch player may substitute in a game or tournament in the event of a shortage of players. Assuming that both commissioners can agree on a schedule of participation for both programs this exception may be allowed to play on both. Failure to meet the obligations of both teams may require the player to be dropped from one of the teams. With this exception this does not entitle the coach to sit a regular player and play the substitute just to get an advantage over the opposition.

Try Outs

Player Participation

The tryout process for Burnsville GTSP requires a substantial time commitment from coaches, evaluators and players. It attempts to objectively, as is possible, measure the skills of players and place them where they will be able to most successfully compete. There is no guarantee of team placement, it is based on how many participants sign up for the league.

Once tryouts and team selections are completed, it is expected that players will participate on the team to which they are assigned. It is important that each player/parent fulfill their commitment to their assigned team. Teams, which are forced to compete with less than a full roster, are at a disadvantage.

In order to be eligible to try out for the GTSP program, a player must have participated in the B.A.C. in house slow pitch program (or similar program) for at least one season.

Consequences for Non-Participation:

There will be no refund of registration fees made after the tryouts are completed.

Consistent with the B.A.C. handbook regarding players who make themselves unavailable for part of all of the season, the player will not be allowed to register for GTSP for the following calendar year.

If a player is unable to compete on the assigned team because of medical or family emergency, the GTSP board shall have the authority to modify or rescind these penalties by a majority vote.

Possible Reassignments

It is our intent to make every effort to place a player on an available Traveling Slow Pitch team. Registrants who do not get placed on a traveling team due to a lack of numbers for a complete team, and efforts to fill the team aren't successful, will have the option to play on with the In-House Slow pitch, provided there is a reasonable means of placing them on an In-House team. If this is not desired, a refund, will be issued to you. Unfortunately, we cannot guarantee that a reassigned player will be placed on their school teams due to in-house teams potentially being formed before the traveling player selections are made.

Playing up to a higher age

It is not the organizations intent to allow players to play up to an older age bracket. We feel it is to the best interest of the players to play at their own age. This allows for a better level of competition for all the teams as a whole and allows more time for growth and maturity to the player that will bring more value to the sport in the long run.

There are some exceptions to this:

- 1) We would allow a coaches daughter/player to play up if the coach is coaching this older age bracket.
- 2) We would allow a player to play up if there are no cuts on the older team. For example if a player is 14 and wants to play 16U and there are 13 players on the 14U team and 12 players on the 16U team this would be a reasonable request as long as no players were cut on the 16U team to arrive at 12 players. The commissioner shall have the final decision to this reassignment as it is not our intent to remove one or more higher level players from the younger teams just to make a more skilled older team. By doing this equal separation it allows for more competitive games against each other as well during the season and is not so one sided.

Team Rosters/Tryouts

Independent evaluators or a volunteer assigned by the commissioner will check in your child and assign her a number before the tryout process. Coaches will not be involved in this process so as to keep the number and your Childs name and number confidential as possible. The participants must not where any clothing with her name on it. We will pin numbers on her shirt for the process.

Tryout Grading Process

Traveling teams are formed by a selection of participants wishing to compete in the traveling programs on a try-out basis. Try-outs are to be organized by the Commissioner under the following guidelines.

1. There shall be multiple evaluators at each try-out.
2. Participation in try-outs is mandatory for consideration with the following exceptions: injury, illness or death of an immediate family member. Medical excuse for injury or illness must be provided.
3. Evaluation form is available at the discretion of the Commissioner.
4. Try-outs may or may not be open to the public at the discretion of the Commissioner. This rule must be applied consistently to all members of the public.
5. Players will be evaluated in a similar fashion to how a high school team would be picked.
6. An indoor tryout will be conducted viewing a players skills on the following areas:
 - a. Batting of a machine and/or pitcher viewing form and results for contact swing mechanics and strength.
 - b. Infield how your daughter handles grounders, which will include the fundamentals and throwing accuracy as well as arm strength (not waiting for the ball to come to them important).

- c. Outfield how well they catch the fly ball with soft hands absorbing the impact their reaction to the ball off the bat and their arm strength throwing it back accurately.
 - d. Pitchers interested should contact the evaluator for a fundamental test. We will use your daughter's ability to properly use her on the team. Coaches will evaluate them on their mechanics and accuracy.
 - e. Catchers please let your evaluator know that you have played catcher. This is a vital position that is too easily overlooked. We need quality catchers
7. After tryouts the commissioner, assistant commissioner and two independent evaluators will add up all the total scores of each participant ranking the highest to the lowest.
 8. If your daughter has signed up for pitching the number one pitcher with the highest all around score automatically makes the team.
 9. The next seven highest scored girls will make the team. These scores will only be known by the commissioner, assistant commissioner and the two independent evaluators.
 10. The next five girls will be picked based on the coach's discretion on how well the player will fit in with the team. The coaches will see all the scores and comments for the remainder of the tryout contestants to utilize in the remainder of their picks. They will if at all possible go by the numbers but we have allowed some flexibility here so that the coaches can use some discretion and put together a team with the best chemistry.
 11. Cuts will be made depending on the availability of players to form complete teams, the availability of facilities, optimum roster size and/or the level of competition available within the league. Optimum size for 12U and 14U would be 12 players. Optimum size for 16U and 18U would be 13 Players. If in the event there were enough players for two teams at the same age level the optimum size would be able to be adjusted anywhere from 11 to 13 players. In the traveling program it is not recommended to carry over 13 players on any of the teams as this restricts playing time and does not help team chemistry. The intent for two teams would be to not have to cut any player(s). If in the event there are enough for two teams at the same age level, the coaches and Commissioner will decide the best way to pick the teams with consideration given to tryout scores, friendships and chemistry.. This picking process would of course be exclusive of the coaches' own daughters if on their teams. Each team must have at least one qualified pitcher. This will be part of the try-out evaluation process. The coaches must keep in mind the friendships and chemistry of the players and use discretion such as if a group of girls were playing with a certain coach for a number of years the other coach should, if at all possible give credence to the other coach when picking highest to lowest scores, as we feel that the friendships to some extent build good chemistry on the teams over the years. If there is a conflict for selecting players for teams then the Commissioner's decision on the team selection will be final.

12. Special consideration will be given to Traveling teams that do not have enough players to fill a roster. In these instances the commissioner may petition the B.A.C. Board of Directors to recruit players from outside the stated eligibility boundaries, as long as such petition is done prior to any recruiting taking place.

Medical and Family Emergency Tryout Policy

In the event that a player is unable to attend one or more day(s) of tryouts, the following provisions shall apply:

1. **Long-Term Medical Absence:** Defined as when the player is injured and cannot return to active competition prior to league play for that specific age level (per doctor estimate). The player will not qualify for a team.
2. **Short-Term Medical Absence:** Defined as when the player is unable to participate in tryouts due to an injury or surgery; is unable to participate in a make-up tryout, but is able to return to active competition prior to league play for that specific age level (per doctor's estimate and recommendation). The player will qualify for a team if:
 - a) Prior to tryouts, applicable paperwork is completed.
 - b) Player has submitted a letter from doctor for illness or injury verification to the Board.
 - c) Player has participated at the requested level, and/or one level above the requested level, the previous two consecutive seasons, or previous season if 12U.
 - d) Last year's coach and current years coach must both recommend the player to be selected to a team based on prior year performance.
 - e) Board reviews and approves documentation
3. **Short –Term Absence:** Defined as when the player is unable to participate in tryouts due to a short-term illness flu/nausea, injury sprained ankle etc., or a death in the family, but is able to participate in make-up tryouts.

The player will be eligible for a makeup tryout if:

- a) Permission is granted by the commissioner after notification to the Board for comment.
- b) The commissioner or assistant commissioner or member of the Board may request a letter from doctor for illness or injury verification.

- c) A player whom has substantially completed the try-out process and falls ill or is injured and cant complete the tryouts, will be given an opportunity to complete those skills that have yet to be evaluated. Previous scores marked will be carried through and included in the final evaluation.
4. **Personal Absence:** Defined as when the player is unable to participate in tryouts due to a previously scheduled family obligation or vacation but is able to participate in makeup tryouts.

The Player will be eligible for makeup tryouts if:

- a) The parent or guardian notifies a board member in writing or e-mail within two weeks of age level tryout requesting permission.
- b) Parent or guardian receives written or email acknowledgement from the commissioner with approval of request prior to a scheduled make up tryout.
 - Make up tryouts are defined as additional try out date(s), for players whom have been approved absent from previous scheduled tryouts.
 - Every attempt should be made to use the same evaluators, but alternatively designated evaluators without any interest of daughter playing in the corresponding age level of the player seeking evaluation, shall be used.

Some of the items contained in this document are actual rules of the B.A.C program. Please reference the actual B.A.C. By-Laws for a complete set of rules. This document is produced as an aid to the program and will give some general direction to some items not covered completely.